

Thank you for your interest in writing a letter to the editor in support of Governor Rod R. Blagojevich's fight for affordable prescription drugs.

Following is a general guideline for writing a letter to the editor. Most papers will accept letters via fax, mail, or email. Previously published editorials in support of reimporting prescription drugs from Canada are available at <http://www.affordabledrugs.il.gov/articles.cfm>.

FORMAT

Date

Newspaper Name

Newspaper Address

Dear Editor,

- 1) *In the first sentence, identify the article to which you are responding, or your reason for writing to the editor.*
- 2) *Explain why you support Governor Blagojevich's efforts to import prescription drugs from Canada. Support your opinion. You may wish to include a personal story about you or a loved one struggling to afford prescription medication or about your success in obtaining safe medications for less from Canada.*

Your name

Your phone number

Your complete address

Key Points to keep in mind:

1) Americans pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. The exact same drugs we use in the U.S. are available for much less in other industrialized countries. A survey by the Associated Press found Canadian prices for ten popular prescription drugs were 33 to 80 percent cheaper than prices in the United States. Cholesterol-controlling Lipitor cost 37 percent less. The anti-depressant, Paxil, cost about half as much when purchased in Canada. The arthritis drug, Vioxx, cost 58 percent less and Risperdal, an anti-psychotic, was 80 percent less.

2) The prescription drugs Governor Blagojevich wants to import from Canada are safe. Not only have these drugs been approved by Canadian regulators, they are the exact same drugs that are approved by the FDA for purchase in the U.S., and Illinois would obtain them from safe, regulated Canadian pharmacies. There would be no question about the origin or quality of the drugs in our plan.

3) A quick review of the facts deflates drug companies' claim that allowing Americans to buy prescription drugs for less from Canada will hamper their research and development. The pharmaceutical industry is one of the most profitable industries in the whole world. The 2002 median profit rate for Fortune 500 drug companies was 17 percent, compared to 3.1 percent for *all* Fortune 500 companies. Financial records indicate marketing/administration accounts for 30.8 percent of Fortune 500 drug companies' revenue. Profit accounts for another 17 percent. Only 14.1 percent of revenue is used for research and development. Additionally, much preliminary drug research is funded by taxpayers through institutions like the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and appears in scientific journals before the big companies become involved.

We hope you have found this information useful. If you have any further questions, please contact Jennifer Wood by email at info@affordabledrugs.il.gov.